

Serial No. 09/711,671
Amendment and Response
Page 9 of 11

Remarks

In the action dated April 8, 2005, claims 1-2 and 18 were rejected as obvious in view of Hitchcock (WO 99/63454); claims 3-17 and 19-30 were rejected as obvious in view of the combination of Hitchcock and Mottola (US 5745885)

Examiner Interview

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's consideration given during the telephonic interview that took place on June 29, 2005, between the Examiner and the undersigned attorney. During the interview claims 1 and 16 were discussed relative to the Hitchcock reference. The undersigned attorney explained that Hitchcock fails to teach or suggest the claimed school-access graphical user interface that enables the school itself to customize the content of the corresponding student-access graphical user interface. The Examiner felt that the distinction needed to be more clearly set forth in the claims and that an amendment to do so would be carefully considered relative to the art.

Claim Amendments

Both independent claims 1 and 18 have been amended above to more clearly point out the distinction over Hitchcock. Specifically, claim 1 has been amended to recite:

the school-access graphical user interface enabling a given post-highschool education facility to establish an account that causes the financial-aid-service software program to provide customization of the corresponding student-access graphical user interface for the given post-highschool education facility, the school-access graphical user interface providing at least one form including entry and/or selection fields for enabling a representative of the given post-highschool education facility to customize customizing the content and operation of the corresponding student-access graphical user interface for the given post-highschool education facility,

Claim 16 has been amended to recite:

providing a computer-implemented school-access graphical user interface accessible by a representative of the post-highschool education facility enabling the post-highschool education facility to establish an account that facilitates customization of the student-access graphical user interface for the post-highschool education facility;

Serial No. 09/711,671
Amendment and Response
Page 10 of 11

the school-access graphical user interface prompting the representative of the post-highschool education facility for content and operation entries that, when entered by the representative, will be used for customization of the student-access graphical user interface for the post-highshcool education facility.

These foregoing amendments clarify a major distinction between the claimed invention and the art, namely that each school can, on its own, setup and customize the financial-aid information/service Web-pages that will be presented to students, by connecting to the school-access graphical user interface. See specification at page 6, line 29 – page 11, line 27, and Figs.

By contrast, Hitchcock describes a forms engine that allows for data sharing between customized on-line forms for different institutions such as college admission application forms for colleges. Hitchcock does not teach school-access graphical user interface providing at least one form including fields for customizing the content and operation of the corresponding student-access graphical user interface. In particular, the examiner cites Hitchcock at page 12, line 12 - page 13, line 8 in support of the assertion, but the cited portions of Hitchcock do not teach a school-access graphical user interface that provides a form including fields for customizing the content and operation of a corresponding student-access graphical user interface. **While the cited portions of Hitchcock arguably teach that the application forms for each institution may be customized, they do not teach that the institution itself uses a school-access graphical user interface to do so.** While the cited portions of Hitchcock arguably teach that institutions can access student data on the third party server, they do not teach the use of a graphical user interface to do so, and the mere accessing of data is not akin to customizing a user interface that will be presented to students.

Applicant has not found any teaching in Hitchcock for a system that includes a school-access graphical user interface that provides a form including fields for customizing the content and operation of a corresponding student-access graphical user interface. Applicant respectfully submits that it is only with hindsight knowledge based upon the applicant's own disclosure that a person of ordinary skill in the art would achieve the

Serial No. 09/711,671
Amendment and Response
Page 11 of 11

claimed invention. It is well recognized that hindsight-based rejections of patent claims are not appropriate.

For the foregoing reasons, independent claims 1 and 18 are patentably distinguishable over Hitchcock, and dependent claim 2 is patentable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claims 3-17 and 19-31


Dependent claims 3-17 and 19-31 are patentable for at least the same reasons as explained above with respect to claims 1 and 18 respectively. Moreover, various of the dependent claims are further distinguishable over the cited combination of Hitchcock and Mattola as explained in the last response filed January 7, 2005. The arguments contained in that response are repeated and incorporated herein by reference for purpose of completeness.

Conclusion

All of claims 1-31 are distinguishable over the art for the reasons explained above and this application should be passed to issue. Please contact the undersigned attorney with any questions regarding this submission or application.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

Respectfully submitted,


Michael J. Nieberding
Reg. No. 39,316

THOMPSON HINE LLP
2000 Courthouse Plaza NE
10 West Second Street
Dayton, Ohio 45402-1758
Telephone (937) 443-6892
Facsimile: (937) 443-6635

540743